Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Curriculum

Strategy:

Developing knowledge and awareness of effective leadership for school programs serving American Indian students from a balanced perspective that addresses both Western and Native approaches to educational leadership.

Goals:

Learners will identify the major concepts that define leadership from a Diné education philosophy of leadership in comparison to prevailing Western models of leadership development.

Learners will identify and respond to cultural differences that impact the effectiveness of leadership practices from Western and Native paradigms.

Summary:

Western thought and models of leadership emphasize innovation and responsiveness to current realities, while Native epistemologies focus on social responsibility and harmony across an organization. The duality of concepts found in traditional Native American practices celebrate the necessary balance between male perspectives of Father Sky that promote “protection way” action in alignment with the female perspectives of Mother Earth that facilitates “blessing way” actions. Native American philosophy is based on the results of thought and feeling that are expressed through values, beliefs, norms, culture, and language. Learners will practice the four components of the Diné philosophy of education that include Nitsáhákees, Nahat’á, líná, and Sihasin.

Materials:


Activities:

Icebreaker and context setting: arrange the classroom so that everyone has a front row seat.

Thinking (Nitsáhákees) Learners are requested to introduce themselves from both professional identity and family background (clans, mother, father, etc.).

Planning (Nahat’á) Learners will discuss the tenets of educational leadership from the perspectives on a continuum from duality, hozho, harmony, balance, compromise, to negotiate.

Doing (liná) Learners will identify an existing leadership practice for conflict resolution that aligns with Western thought and model a promising practice from Native thought that provides an alternative to resolve conflict.

Reflecting (Sihasin) Learners will identify the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and values that guide the specific practices that implemented.

Important Concepts:

Culture
Language
Identity
Balance between Western and Native Ideologies
Culturally Responsive Leadership
Diné Education Philosophy

Sihasin

Nitsahakees (the process of thinking and conceptualizing)

Nahat’a (the process of planning, inquiring, investigating, and experimenting)

lina

(the process of making critical affirmative action of thinking, planning, learning, becoming experienced, expert, and confident to adapt)

(the process of applied learning, accomplishing, producing, performing, and publishing)